

present proposal to cut the earned income tax credit by \$32 billion, those working people who have three or more kids, those with a small amount of Social Security payments or who are childless and earn less than \$9,750 a year; at the faces of 500,000 hard working families with incomes under \$29,000 who have a seriously handicapped child and would see their SSI benefits reduced by 25 percent; at the faces of 119,000 students in Michigan alone who might see the cost of education go up because of cuts in student loans.

It is not just the public that is concerned about the faces behind the numbers. More and more mainstream economists share this concern, as evidenced in the New York Times of yesterday.

Since coming to Congress, I voted for every major deficit reduction package signed into law by both Republican and Democratic Presidents. It is interesting that so many of those who now say they champion a budget, a balanced budget, were champions of the policies in the 1980's that were a substantial cause of raising the national debt by four times.

It is time to finish the job of balancing the budget and rightsizing Government. We must stop mortgaging the future, but we will get to the zero in the long run if we ignore the faces behind the numbers in the short run.

BACK TO WORK ON REPUBLICAN TERMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. WELLER] is recognized during morning business for 3 minutes.

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, today's headline in Washington Times, a major national newspaper, really says it all. It is back to work on Republican terms. Clinton accepts 7-year formula.

That says a lot, ladies and gentlemen. The President has now made a commitment to the American taxpayer to balance the budget and to balance it over 7 years, using honest economic figures and honest numbers. Now that is a big concession on the President's part, and I want to thank the President.

I also want to thank the constituents, the hundreds of constituents that have called my office over the last few days, and in fact their calls were 9 to 1 in favor of the Republican plan to balance the budget over 7 years.

I also want to thank the 48 conservative and moderate Democrats who backed the 7-year timetable that Republicans have called for. It is reasonable, and the President now concurs, 7 years, and no longer.

We Republicans have laid on the table a reasonable commonsense plan which eliminates the deficit over 7 years. Our plan eliminates the deficit over 7 years using honest numbers. We save Medicare from bankruptcy, while increasing spending on Medicare by

\$355 billion over this period of 7 years. That is a 50-percent increase over what we currently spend.

We reform welfare to emphasize work and family and responsibility. And yes, we provide tax relief for working families. What that means for my constituents, Illinois taxpayers, is that the President has agreed to spend \$1 trillion less than he originally wanted to spend, and that means that America's children, particularly our Nation's children, will get to see a better economic future.

Now it is time to see the specifics of the President's plan. What is the President's plan to balance the budget over the next 7 years? Of course we do not want to see any smoke and mirrors. We want to use honest numbers. We want to see the details.

Two years ago, the President and the Democrats in this body, my friends over here on the left, gave us the biggest tax hike in the history of our country. What it meant to the people of the State of Illinois was a \$1,100 per capita tax hike in its first year alone, \$1,100 for every man, woman, and child in the first year.

The Democrats gave us higher taxes on Social Security benefits on my seniors and higher taxes on the motor fuel that my working people use to go to work. That was their proposal to eliminate the deficit.

Now we Republicans stood firm and every Republican opposed the Democrat tax hikes in 1993, and we continue to oppose Democratic tax hikes and want and insist on tax relief for working families.

Republicans have laid on the table a plan to balance the budget over the next 7 years, contains no tax increases. In fact, it provides tax relief for working families. We reform welfare and we save Medicare.

And the bottom line is by balancing the budget economists tell us that it is good for families because interest rates are coming down, lower mortgage rates, lower car loans, lower student loans. Frankly, that is what we are doing for the American people, is giving them a better future. Mr. President, it is time to show us your plan.

GOVERNMENT OPENS AGAIN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] is recognized during morning business for 2 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, the Government is back in business. That is good news.

It is good news for millions of veterans whose benefit checks and claims can now be processed.

It is good news for thousands of Medicare beneficiaries and thousands of head-start children who will get needed help from the Government. Child support cases can now be pushed. Good news.

It is good news for law enforcement—the FBI is now fully back at work—it

is good news for housing—mortgages can be processed and homeless funds can be released—and, it is good news for business and enterprise in America—so many of which were affected by the furloughs.

The image of a shutdown Statue of Liberty—one of the greatest symbols of what this Nation stands for—was perhaps the most dramatic example of the danger of a Government closed down.

It is for that reason, Mr. Speaker, that I want to applaud the President and all in Congress, House and Senate, Democrats and Republicans, who made this moment possible.

Our leaders worked throughout the weekend, pressing forward toward agreement, making sure that we could avoid a second week of—half the Government—off the job.

It was a proud and happy moment for me—last night, as a Member of Congress—when the House followed the Senate in passing the joint resolution which ended the impasse.

We have agreed to work toward a balanced budget in 7 years. That is good news.

I voted for the Democratic version of a 7-year balanced budget plan, and I believe, working together, we can achieve that important goal.

And, most importantly—in the days and weeks ahead—we will try to forge a budget that not only balances our money, but one that balances our priorities as well. A balanced budget that considers our seniors, our children, farmers, and our environment. That is good news.

Let us decide if we need a \$245 billion dollar tax cut. But, if we cut taxes, let us cut taxes fairly.

Let us make sure that any tax break we may enact, provides benefit to average Americans—those who work hard each day to make ends meet.

And, most importantly, if we develop a tax cut program, let us make sure that we do so without putting in jeopardy essential social programs.

I believe these goals are part of the agreement that was reached over the weekend. That is good news.

Mr. Speaker, with this agreement, we have time. But, we do not have much time.

As the budget of the United States has developed, we have witnessed the true genius of our system—a system of separation of powers—a system of checks and balances. Some power is given to the Congress and other powers are reserved for the President.

But, in the end, this system only works when it allows the Government and its employees to work. The Government is back in business.

The Statute of Liberty once again welcomes those "yearning to breathe free." And, the spirit of this Nation—the American people—have won a great victory. The work now begins.

I hope we will now do what is best for the people, rather than what is best for our party or our politics. That is what ended the impasse.